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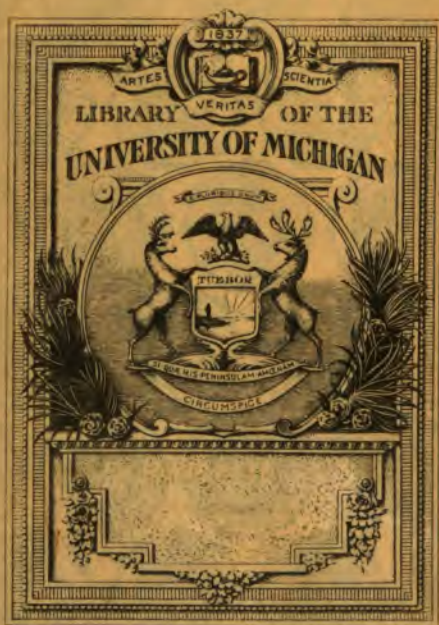
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BUILDING
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Animadversions

ON 215

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Mr. BROWN'S

THREE ESSAYS

ON THE

Characterifticks.

Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian Spring. POPE.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. NOON, at the *White-Hart* in the
Poultry. MDCCCLII.

[Price One Shilling.]

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P R E F A C E.

*T*O know and own our Friends, is not more expedient in private life, than promotive of any public interest, for which we are concerned; especially since mankind are, and will be, so much ruled by the authority of Great Names. And it is certainly imprudent, to say no worse, in some sincere Advocates for christianity, to reject the friendly advice and assistance of so masterly a Writer as the late Lord Shaftsbury, and to give Him up to the Deists, as a patron of infidelity. In many Others, who have also given the same unfair and invidious representation of his Lordship, this conduct is by no means impolitic and ill-judged: since they have had other views than that of promoting true christianity, which are justly exposed by his Lordship with a peculiar Elegance of raillery and strength of Reasoning: Hence the antipathy and prejudice, which they have conceived, and so industriously propagated against

P R E F A C E.

against his free writings. But whatever may be expected from the misapprehension of the ignorant, and the ever-watchful jealousy of Those, who find it their interest to encourage the superstitious and slavish principles of the Vulgar : there yet are some hearty and judicious Wellwishers to our holy Religion, who, the Author hopes, will not be offended with an attempt to illustrate several important points of his Lordship's philosophy, and fairly to represent His sentiments concerning natural and revealed religion, in the following Animadversions on Mr. BROWN's Essays : which will fully answer his intention, if they induce his Readers, either to give the Characteristicks a fair, impartial, and intire perusal, or to forbear their censures of the Noble Author.

Ani-

Animadversions

UPON

Mr. BROWN'S THREE ESSAYS, &c.

ANIMADVERSIONS *upon* ESSAY I.

On RIDICULE.

SECT. I. **M**R. *Brown*, having in his introduction raised our hopes of his impartiality and candour, by inculcating the 'generous spirit of freedom, which shines throughout the Characteristicks;' proceeds to observe in his 6th page, 'That his Author, not content with establishing the free, chearful exercise of reason in treating the subjects of Religion and Morals, revolts from his principles; and attempts to establish the test of ridicule, as a surer method of conviction.' Hereby he intimates, that his Author sets the test of ridicule in opposition to that of reason, in order to supersede the latter. How just his Criticism is, will appear from the following passages in V. 1. p. 69, 77. "We shall grow better reasoners by reasoning pleasantly and at our ease.—"Tis

" the habit alone of reasoning, that can make a
 " reasoner. And men can never be better in-
 " vited to the habit, than when they find plea-
 " sure in it; using a freedom of railery, a liberty
 " in decent language to question every thing,
 " and an allowance of unravelling or refuting
 " any argument." Which is a full definition
 of that wit and humour, which the noble Au-
 thor recommends, and shews him to have a
 sufficiently precise and determinate Meaning.
 See p. 7 and 9.

SECT. II. In this section our Critic remarks
 upon his Author's abhorrence of pedantry; but
 the pedantry he abhors, is not the reasoning
 clearly and distinctly upon a subject; but the
 authoritative air and bigotry of those, who love
 to reign and be dictators in a point of contro-
 versy, and a blind and stiff adherence to re-
 ceived opinions: and it is in opposition to this
 decisive and peremptory dogmaticalness, and
 not to strict reasoning, that he expressly recom-
 mends the more free, polite and chearful me-
 thod of wit and humour: which our Critic
 himself, in confirmation of his Author's senti-
 ment, prefers to the morose and surly spirit of
 bigotry, (p. 5.) And this method is of use in
 disgracing known falsehood; in detecting false-
 hood, and lastly of course in investigating un-
 known truth: (p. 6) For to see Error exposed
 is one Step to true Wisdom.

In p. 9. Our Critic censures his Author for
 indulging a loose and random wit; but I rather
 incline

incline to the opinion, he delivers in p. 11; where he well observes, that none ever knew the value of order and proportion better than Lord *Shaftsbury*, and that confusion can only tend to disgrace truth and disguise falsehood.

SECT. III. In this section he thinks he has thoroughly explained his subject; but to use his own allusion, p. 41. while he attempts to give us a full view of a spacious Dome, he seems to have thrown many of the exterior parts of the edifice into the center. For so exuberant is his fancy, that his learned observations are for the most part quite foreign to his subject; and such is his good-nature and inoffensiveness, that the rest may be admitted without prejudice to his Author.

It is observable, that our Critic, having given merely arbitrary definitions of eloquence and argument in p. 29; ‘the former, says he, offering apparent truth to the imagination, and the latter real truth to the understanding:’ infers from hence, ‘That to instruction or inquiry every species of eloquence must for ever be an enemy.’ But in p. 37, he says, ‘That species of eloquence is the noblest, which tends to conduct us to the same point with reason,’ that is, to Truth. ’Tis clear, that eloquence may be employed in the service or disservice of truth; which is also true of raillery and scepticism. For as his Lordship observes, “if it be contrary to good breeding, it will in this respect be contrary to liberty,” and by consequence

quence prejudicial to truth; and, There is nothing so foolish and deluding as “ a partial scepticism.” “ But if it be under prudent management, Religion will never be endangered by it:” or to use the Critic’s own words in p. 47, ‘ it will be that species of ridicule which conducts us to the same point with reason.’ Altho’ indeed, a little before, he declares it to be ever an enemy to speculative instruction or inquiry.

SECT. V. He elaborately shews, how ignorant and inconsistent mankind often are in the use and application of ridicule, in order to make out his Conclusion, ‘ that the reasoning faculty and not ridicule is the test of truth;’ which strongly concludes in favour of his Author. For his Lordship cautions “ against an extream in ridicule, and recommends the way of wit and humour by this argument, that reason may have its proof and be distinguished.”

SECT. VI. Our Critic here censures his Author’s, as he calls it, ambiguous assertion, “ That nothing is ridiculous except what is deformed;” and yet confirms his meaning in it by justly observing in p. 55, 6, 7. ‘ That what actually appears ridiculous, first appears deformed; and that real bravery, and generosity, if they are not disguised but retain their native appearance, cannot be turned into ridicule: and that the virtues are admired, unless by misrepresentation they be made to start up

‘ in the forms of ideots, hags, and monsters.’ In which case it is plain, that these silly appearances, and not the real form of virtue, are ridiculous. To say that virtue may be made ridiculous, because it may be misrepresented, is like saying that the wisest proposition is false, because it may be misconstrued.

To shew the invincible power of truth, where learning and freedom prevail, the noble Author instances in *Socrates*; whose doctrine supported itself against the wit of *Aristophanes*: our Critic wonders, expatiates boldly, and concludes his remarks with an air of triumph, boasting to have silenced his Author’s admirers; which he really has done, for how should they make a reply, when they find no objection? For indeed, Mr. *Brown*! you have not even contradicted your Author. Whatever mischief the blasphemous Comedian might do to the person of *Socrates*, he gave no let to the progress of his divine philosophy. This is a Truth evident from fact, which you have not once denied; and is all that your Author affirms in the passage, you censure as encouraging ‘ dishonest ridicule’ in p. 63.

SECT. VII. He objects against his Author’s remark, viz. Truth may bear all lights, That it cannot bear a false one. Does his Lordship say, it can? Is there no variety of true lights, no different ways of representing things truly? Or does He propose a false medium in that of

ridicule? Let his definition answer. "Ridicule is that method of proof, by which we discern whatever is liable to *just* raillery on any subject." V. I. p. 61. This sense of the word his Lordship always adheres to; and not one instance has been produced by Mr. *Brown*, who charges his Author with confusion and ambiguous language; nor can one be produced, in which he designs it to convey any other meaning. And in recommending the use of this ridicule, which implies "justness of thought;" how can his Lordship be supposed to exclude reason and to recommend an half-inquiry, than which, he observes, there is nothing more foolish and deluding. And what sense is there in that capital objection of Mr. *Brown's*, viz. That his Lordship makes ridicule (which is conducted with justness of thought) the test of what is rational, instead of making reason the test of what is ridiculous?

All the remaining objections, which our Critic advances in this section, depend upon supposing his Author to maintain the following notions; viz. That a man may have justness of thought, and be mistaken at once in the same thing; p. 65. that the use of ridicule is inconsistent with that of reason, that the way of gravity may be false and be abused to ill purposes, but ridicule cannot; p. 67, 8. that imposture not only generally but constantly assumes an air of gravity, but never that of buffoonery and false humour; p. 69. that the ridicule he means

to recommend, is inconsistent with chearfulness and good-humour, and in short an embroiler and incendiary. p. 70. and, lastly, that abused ridicule is one of the least powerful engines, by which Error can be maintained and established; p. 74. But his Author has delivered perfectly the reverse of all these absurdities: which are only 'the ideots, hags, and monsters, that have 'odly started up' in the imagination of our Critic, and assumed the name of Lord Shaftsbury's sentiments; and no wonder, if he cannot touch his Author, while he thus pursues a lying Phantom.

Instat cui Turnus... See p. 10.

SECT. VIII. Our Critic in p. 76, calls upon his Lordship's followers to get him off as they can: but I see no difficulty in the passages he quotes, and I am sure he points out none. He indeed questions, whether his Lordship was a believer and a protestant; and that without assigning the least reason of his suspicion.

(Where is now your professed candour and impartiality, Mr. Brown !

Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret.)

Then having given us a conjecture or two of his Lordship's, he breaks out into a vehement exclamation, and calmly concludes with annexing in solemn phrase the sanction of his own

judgment and authority to those very sentiments, which we find in the passages, he quotes and censures. For he observes with his Lordship, ' That Christianity had more to fear from the ' contemptuous misrepresentations than the bit- ' tereft rage of its enemies, &c.' p. 80.

I am sorry that our Critic seems not to understand his Author's design in these passages; which was to recommend the way of ridicule, the chearful and facetious exercise of reason, as a preservative from the gloom of superstition and the extravagances of enthusiasm: which naturally leads him to this observation, That raillery is the severest test of any doctrine.

SECT. IX. Our Critic, as we have seen, represents his Author as contending for a certain irrational ridicule: and in this section he declares his consent with that supposed opinion of his Lordship, *viz.* that all raillery excludes reasoning; and forcibly presseth *Aristotle* into his service (by what I am sorry to mention, considering the true pains he has taken, in this single point, to display his grammatical skill and familiarity with that Philosopher's stile and sentiment;) by a mistaken translation either of σπουδῇ or γελῶς, in the following Passage —

—— δει την μεν σπουδην διαφθειρειν των εναντιων
 γελῶσι, τον δε γελῶα σπουδῇ

His Translation is, you ought to confound

your adversary's serious argument by raillery, and his raillery by serious argument.

Pray, Mr. *Brown*! why ought not γελως to be rendered humorous argument, as well as σπουδη serious argument? Have not those words, in their strict signification, an equal claim and right to include argument? Why then are you so arbitrary and partial in favour of σπουδη? Why truly to shew that *Aristotle* thought, more than he has expressed, that reason can be grave, but never humorous.

His Lordship's construction of the words into gravity and humour, is accurately just: and if humour is of use in eloquence in general, it is so in 'that species of eloquence, which conducts to the same point with reason,' that is, to truth: and by consequence it is of use in speculative inquiries after truth. It is with propriety then, that his Lordship improves this particular precept of the Great Critic upon Eloquence, into that general rule for helping our speculations, which is contained in this maxim: Humour is the only test of gravity; and gravity, of humour. * Use the grave method of reasoning,

* Mr. *Brown*, it seems, cannot be reconciled to this compendious manner of expression, which is common in aphorisms or proverbial maxims. I shall therefore observe by way of illustration, that the different ways of reasoning, viz. gravity and humour, like the algebraical and geometrical ways of demonstrating a proposition, may with strict

ing, as a test of the humorous, because a jest that will not bear a serious examination, is certainly false wit. And try the grave way, by the humorous; because a serious argument, that is liable to just raillery, is false. But be honest and steady to the cause of truth; and keep that in your aim constantly in the use of both methods. Beware of sinking into a too deep thoughtfulness, in which the mind is apt to lose itself; and check that natural propensity towards veneration and astonishment, which, with its usual concomitant, implicit submission to authority, often restrains men from a rational inquiry, and lays them under the chains of ignorance and slavish zeal.

On the other hand, be cautious of a silly affectation and immoderate love of wit; and suffer not yourself to be diverted from your principal aim by any pleasant images and ludicrous scenes of fancy, that may happen to present themselves.

By these and other precepts of equal importance, the noble Author teaches us to chastise our passions, even those, which naturally whet our appetite for knowledge; and with caution to indulge one passion, as that of humour, when
we

propriety be termed the mutual test of each other. For if both be true, they mutually confirm each other; if only one be true, it will refute the other; and if both be false and inconsistent, they will probably by their clashing, as it were, like fire, and cast light upon a subject.

we are in danger of exceeding in a contrary one, as grave admiration or mysterious enthusiasm : that so they may be all subservient to the improvement of our minds ; and while they stimulate our reason, may yet by a due counterpoise preserve it free and easy in its exercises.

But his Lordship has not only taught us by his precepts, how to apply humour to the search of truth. But what is by much the most agreeable and improving way of instruction, he has favoured us in his Essay with a specimen of that humorous kind of writing, which he means to recommend. And whoever reads it in an accurate and studious manner, will not find his humour to be, (as Mr. *Brown* represents it) a light, trifling, and superficial wit ; which diverts itself with unmeaning jokes and ambiguous innuendos : but will be pleased to see, how chaste it is, how happily tempered with gravity in treating the most important subjects, and how successfully it is employed in defence of liberty, honesty, and religion.

ANIMADVERSIONS *upon* Mr. Brown's
THREE ESSAYS *on* the CHARACTE-
RISTICS.

ANIMADVERSIONS *upon* ESSAY II.

On the obligations of man to virtue, and the necessity of religious principles.

SECT. II. OUR Critic justly observes, that the noble Author's definition of virtue conveys the same idea, that the word itself generally does; which is an argument of the propriety of the definition, especially if his Lordship has before explained its terms. But the term, *moral objects of right and wrong*, he has before explained; and means by it, all those qualities, which come under the cognisance and censure of that faculty in the mind of man, which is called conscience, or moral taste, or moral sense. Whoever has this faculty, cannot but understand the term; and he, that has it not, can never be made to understand it by all the definitions in the world. And his Lordship has also, with equal accuracy and judgment, prepared his attentive reader for the use of the other terms in his definition, *viz. a just disposition or proportionable affection of a rational crea-*

crea-

creature towards those objects. The disposition or affection towards any moral objects is plainly then just in kind, when it is that of love or aversion, which they justly deserve; and proportionable in degree, when that love or aversion has its due share of influence; fortifying the agent against all difficulties and temptations, and inclining him to do nothing inconsistent with that disposition, which is due to other moral objects of higher moment.

If our candid reader should imagine any difficulty or intricacy in the last clause of our explication; he will find it entirely cleared up, by an attentive perusal of what Lord *Shaftsbury* offers by way of preliminary to his definition. He may perhaps of himself see, that there may sometimes happen a competition not only betwixt the plain instances of virtue and vice; but also betwixt the particular instances of duty or virtue, that may invite the agent to different actions at the same time. Thus, to use Mr. *Brown*'s instance in p. 134, a parent may be moved or tempted by a sense of the duty he owes his child, to one course of action; and at the same time, by a sense of the duty he owes the public, to a different course. In which case, the conscientious parent will inquire, in which of these duties the prepollency of obligation lies; and finding it to lie in the regard he owes his country, he will be determined by this motive; convinced that upon a comparison parental duty in this instance is not binding, and

that his natural tenderness would have been immoderate and criminal, if it had induced him to violate the higher obligation of a public spirit. This, I hope, is sufficient to shew the full meaning and judiciousness of his Lordship's definition; which is at once a most comprehensive and exact one; and affords us a just criterion or test, by which to determine the merit of actions, *viz.* Whether they flow from a just disposition, &c. See p. 117.

I beg leave to observe, that to discover with perfect precision and certainty the merit or demerit, and the degree of each in the actions of men, is difficult, if not impossible, for us: because we can seldom, if ever, see all the real springs or motives of acting, the exact measure of reason and knowledge they have, the peculiar relations and obligations, which each man finds in his own sphere of life, and many other circumstances. But if any fact be fairly represented to the mind of man, with all the circumstances that any way affect the moral nature of it, he would then by the power of conscience, form a just and exact determination concerning the merit of the fact; his conscience would naturally incline him to use the method, which his Lordship has pointed out in his definition; and to inquire, whether or no the action flowed from a just disposition, &c.

SECT. III. Mr. Brown's supposed fact of a man's talking designedly to a post, or to a man

in an unknown tongue ; does not properly come under the cognisance of conscience ; but under that of reason, which pronounces it madness.

In his 129 p. and elsewhere, He represents Lord *Shaftsbury* as maintaining an original, independent moral beauty of action, without taking into consideration the tendencies, ends and consequences of action. Surely he has never read the first book of the *Inquiry*, in which his Lordship has shewn, that the moral character of actions depends upon the temper and affections, whence they proceed : which plainly implies a regard to the intended or probable consequences of such actions. When his Lordship, immediately after making mention of fashion, law, custom and religion, asserts the independent nature of worth and virtue, how can it be imagined that he asserts the moral quality of actions to be independent upon their ends and consequences?

Mr. *Brown* has thrown an ambiguity into the question concerning the quality of actions, for want of making a necessary distinction betwixt a philosophical and a political inquiry on this subject ; the result of which may be sometimes quite contrary. A politician will determine an action to be right or wrong according to the good or bad influence, he thinks it has, upon the public : but the philosopher, whose business it is to ascertain the merit of the agent in that action, will consider the probable views and in-

tentions, knowledge and temper of the agent; and may therefore pass a different judgment of it. And while he establishes 'The principle' (as he calls it) of universal happiness as the 'last criterion or test, to which the moral beauty, truth, or rectitude of our affections is to be referred:' it would become him to consider, how much divided mankind are in their opinions concerning the means of promoting universal happiness, and even of, what we mortals call, the public good; and that notwithstanding his 'one uniform circumstance of public happiness,' which he prescribes as an infallible remedy for all doubts and difficulties on this subject; yet till he has fixed another criterion, by which we may certainly know the public consequences of actions, we shall be forced to judge by no other than the despicable rule of fancy and opinion. See p. 140. I might pursue this reflection, were I not afraid of being suspected of fondly attempting to disturb our Critic's high satisfaction, by undermining his plain hypothesis. But I decline such an unfriendly part: and for the future shall leave him to the enjoyment of his own imaginations and expressions; and confine myself to the examination of his censures of the noble Author.

SECT. IV. He censures him in this section for laying a precarious foundation, and betraying the cause of virtue. The charge I understand; but the reason of it, which he imme-

directly prefixed, is to me unintelligible, if it be not the same sentiment with that in his 129 p. which we have considered.

SECT. V. This section is consecrated to the witty, but unphilosophical Dr. *Mandeville*.

SECT. VI. Mr. *Brown* in his 159 p. affirms, that his Author has not shown our obligation to virtue by any particular argument; whereas he has elaborately proved it in his inquiry by these arguments, viz. That every man is under the obligation of conscience, of the moral sense, to act virtuously; that the general constitution of the mind of man makes the enjoyment of virtuous dispositions necessary to his happiness; and that the practice of our duty is, in the main at least, favourable to our external interest: or, to sum up the whole in his Lordship's own words, "that virtue is the good and vice the ill of every one."

I shall here observe that he often throws a cloud over his Author's meaning, by representing many of his professed sentiments and arguments, as if they were only accidental observations or forced concessions. For example, in p. 134. he says the noble Writer hath allowed, if kindness or love of the most natural sort be immoderate, it is undoubtedly vicious: which is one of his Lordship's arguments to prove the necessity of a due balance in the affections. And in p. 165, he calls this a concession also; that

he affirms the perception of moral excellence to be as really pleasant and delightful, as the perception of natural beauty, order, and harmony. *

SECT. VII. He censures Him for affirming, that the uniform exercise of the public affections is the only source of happiness to every individual; and that the private affections are by no means a foundation for private happiness: this extravagance he condemns, as if his Author meant to exclude the meaner gratifications of life entirely out of the happiness of the virtuous. Whereas, among other arguments in favour of virtue, his Lordship insists largely in his inquiry on its happy efficacy in respect of inferior enjoyments. And this argument he himself takes notice of; but according to his usual artifice calls it a concession.

He gives us, in p. 179, a quotation from his Author, which, he says, seems to imply, that the most obdurate endeavours, to get rid of the force of moral beauty, are ineffectual and vain: which is directly contrary to the true meaning of the passage, viz. That if the beauty of virtue does not charm and attract us, some inferior and false beauty will, as that of grandeur, titles, honours, &c.

In

* The same unfairness Mr. Brown hath shewn towards several Authors, whom he mentions occasionally: particularly towards the ingenious Author of *The Pleasures of Imagination*, a Poem. See p. 99.

In his 184 p. he quotes part of an admirable passage in the Essay on wit and humour; the design of which is, to inculcate an uniform adherence to virtue from this consideration, that the misery and vexation, that attends an inconsistency of conduct, and fluctuating betwixt virtue and vice, is greater than even that, which attends a perverse and thorough wickedness. This Mr. Brown produces as a confirmation of his own assertion, 'that where the selfish or malevolent affections prevail, there can be no internal motive or natural obligation to virtue.' Excellent reasoning in truth! He quotes also a chapter in *Arrian* † for the same purpose, the substance of which is this prudential caution.

Be not like children; who are fond of every novelty, and are easily diverted from any pursuit, when a new object accosts their fancy. If they see a play acted they are for being actors: if they hear fiddlers, they want a fiddle; and if they see a company of soldiers, they are all for military accoutrements and fighting. Be not you such apes: fix one plan of life; but count the cost, reckon upon all the difficulties of it, take an exact account of the good and evil immediately attending and consequent upon it; draw the balance, and if after so mature a deliberation you are satisfied with the plan, pursue it

† *Nonne acriores morsus sunt intermissæ libertatis, quam retentiæ? Civilis certe sunt acriores, eamque ob causam sunt morali.*

it steadily with all your soul and might: that for there may be a symphony, a concordance, and uniformity in all your actions. Think not to be good and bad by turns; and religious only upon occasion: || Mr. Brown? pray read the original again; and say, Whether you still think, that the ancients were of the same opinion with some modern philosophers; and counted it a matter of indifference to the happiness of mankind, whether they be consistent in virtue or vice?

SECT. VIII. He condemns the noble Author for maintaining the all-sufficiency of conscience, or the moral sense, in all men to induce them to the constant practice of virtue. But on the contrary he often pathetically * laments the insufficiency and defect of that moral principle; and therefore corroborates and strengthens the more refined arguments to goodness by inferior and less honourable motives. He indeed supposes all men to have a capacity of virtue; and if they have not, Mr. Brown? not all the arguments and motives you can possibly invent, nor the highest promises of happiness both in this and a future world, can ever give them that capacity, or make them virtuous in the least.

SECT.

|| Arr. Lib. 3. C. 15. να σε δεῖ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι, ἢ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν. Compare with Rev. Ch. 3. v. 15. I would thou wert cold or hot, that is, Declare sincerely and entirely for virtue or vice.

* E. G. In a passage which Mr. Brown quotes in his 11 section.

SECT. IX. In this section he charges his Lordship with decrying the hope of future reward, as unworthy of a man, as miserable, vile, and mercenary. Whereas his Lordship's representation of the subject is really this: The merit of acting from the hope of future reward, depends upon the notion we have of that reward. For example, if our hope be that of a *Mahometan* paradise, it will naturally cherish those sensual propensities, which alone it promises to gratify; and so may be in danger of infecting the temper. But if our hope be of such an happy kind, as to include "the love and desire of virtuous enjoyment," * it is not derogatory to "virtue:" which his Lordship expressly asserts in *Mr. Brown's* quotation in p. 216. But of this more in our 35 p.

I shall only add under this section this quære, relating to *Mr. Brown's* 211 p. Take away adoration and gratitude to the Supream Being, and the other parts of devotion, which are necessarily included in them,

D

out

* That is, such enjoyment as cannot be relished without a virtuous disposition: which, I hope, the reader has a better taste than to think, as our Critic thinks it, an unintelligible refinement.

out of religion; and what remains of nobleness and dignity will there be in religion?

SECT. X. This section contains an heavy charge against the noble Author, namely, that he throws an odium on that method of religious discipline, called catechising. But the catechising his Lordship disapproves, is expressly that, which instils metaphysical points of faith into tender minds: and he plainly recommends a method of instruction, namely, such as may teach young persons the knowledge of themselves, the great end of their being, and wherein their supreme felicity doth naturally consist; and such, in short, as may teach them the most useful doctrines, (not by rote merely, but) in the most useful manner, by giving them an insight into the reasons and kind design and excellence of those summary precepts and divine laws; which ought to determine them in their conduct, and be the leading principles of their lives. And this, the reader will easily see, is implied in the detached passage, even as it stands in Mr. *Brown's* quotation, in p. 230: which compare with our 53 page.

But I am weary of the trifling remarks,
which

which my subject has forced me to; and want to relieve myself and reader from this insipid and disagreeable task: which I cannot better do, than by transcribing what follows:

— “ Though the appearing disorders in
 “ the present course of things, hold ever so
 “ strongly against virtue, and in favour of
 “ vice, the objection, which arises hence
 “ against a Deity, may be easily removed,
 “ and set right again on the supposal of a
 “ future state. This to a christian, or one
 “ already convinced of so great a point, is
 “ sufficient to clear every dark cloud of
 “ providence. For he needs not be over-
 “ and-above solicitous as to the fate of
 “ virtue in this world, who is secure of
 “ Hereafter. But the case is otherwise as to
 “ the people we are here to encounter.
 “ They are at a loss for providence, and
 “ seek to find it in the world. The ag-
 “ gravation of the appearing disorders in
 “ worldly affairs, and the blackest represen-
 “ tation of society and human nature, will
 “ hardly help ’em to this view. ’Twill be
 “ difficult for ’em to read providence in
 “ such characters. From so uncomely a
 “ face of things below, they will presume
 “ to think unfavourably of all above. By
 “ the effects they see, they will be inclined

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“ to

“ to judge the cause, and by the fate of vir-
 “ tue to determine of a providence. But
 “ being once convinced of order and a pro-
 “ vidence, as to things present, they may
 “ soon perhaps be satisfied even of a future
 “ state. For if virtue be to itself no small
 “ reward, and vice in a great measure its
 “ own punishment; we have a solid ground
 “ to go upon. The plain foundations of a
 “ distributive justice, and due order in this
 “ world, may lead us to conceive a further
 “ building. We apprehend a larger scheme,
 “ and easily resolve ourselves, why things
 “ were not compleated in this State; but
 “ their accomplishment reserv’d rather to
 “ some further period. For had the good
 “ and virtuous of mankind been wholly
 “ prosperous in this life; had goodness never
 “ met with opposition, nor merit ever lain
 “ under a cloud; where had been the tri-
 “ al, victory, or crown of virtue? Where
 “ had the virtues had their theatre, or
 “ whence their names? Where had been
 “ temperance or self-denial? Where pa-
 “ tience, meekness, magnanimity? Whence
 “ have these their being? What merit, ex-
 “ cept from hardship? What virtue with-
 “ out a conflict, and the encounter of such
 “ enemies as arise both within, and from
 “ abroad? -

“ But

“ But as many as are the difficulties
 “ which virtue has to encounter in this
 “ world, her force is yet superior. Expos’d
 “ as she is here, she is not however abandon’d or left miserable. She has enough
 “ to raise her above pity, tho’ not above our
 “ wishes: and as happy as we see her here,
 “ we have room for further hopes in her
 “ behalf. Her present portion is sufficient
 “ to shew providence already engaged on her
 “ side. And since there is such provision
 “ for her Here, such happiness and such advantages even in this life; how probable
 “ must it appear, that this providential care
 “ is extended yet further to a succeeding
 “ life, and perfect Hereafter!”

See Ch. V. 2. P. 275, 6. For these, kind Reader! are indeed the words of That Author; who, according to Mr. *Brown*’s censure, ‘ teaches only a visionary, irrational, and dangerous Philosophy; who decries the prospect of future happiness and misery, as an useless principle; who attempts to ridicule and dishonour religion in every shape, and denies it to have any good influence upon men.’

ANI-

ANIMADVERSIONS *upon* Mr. Brown's
ESSAYS *on* the CHARACTERIS-
TICKS.

ANIMADVERSIONS *upon* ESSAY III.

On revealed religion and Christianity.

SECT. I. **H**IS first section is so full of pure invective, that it offers not the least argument to our animadversion. I shall only observe upon the confused representation; which in his 243 p. he has given us of the noble Author's sentiments; that his Lordship is not speaking of Christianity, when he is expressing his entire condescension to his superiors: as Mr. Brown intimates. For the connection and references plainly shew, that his Lordship is there speaking of such doctrines, as were supported by pretences only to miracles and inspiration, and of those holy rites, those distinguishing tenets and mysterious points of faith, which are by law established, and have

Have the sanction of ancient councils; the temper and authority of which (He says) may be judged of by that of later synods and modern convocations. See Vol. 3. p. 70, 71. and the passages there referred to: where notwithstanding Mr. *Brown's* censure of his Author's broken hints and ambiguous expressions, He clearly and fully delivers his sentiments upon these subjects; and in such a way too, as is perfectly consistent both with a decent regard to the civil Authority, and the explicit declaration, which at other times he makes, in favour of Revelation.

His Lordship says of himself, in Vol. 3. p. 70. " that he is as little a sceptic in the
 " vulgar sense of that word, as he is *Epicu-*
 " *rean* or atheist. And again, As to what
 " relates to revelation in general, he profes-
 " ses to believe, as far as is possible for
 " any one, who himself had never experi-
 " enced any divine communication, whether
 " by dream, vision, apparition or other su-
 " pernatural operation; nor was ever present
 " as eye-witness of any sign, prodigy, or
 " miracle whatsoever. And in Vol. 2.
 " p. 330. Christians have a far better and
 " truer revelation (than the Heathens or
 " Jews) They have plainer oracles, a more
 " rational law and clearer scripture, carrying
 its

" its own force, and withal so well attested:
 " as to admit of no dispute. And further;
 " The * exact time, when miracles might
 " have ceased, probably was, when Sacred
 " Writ took place and was compleated."

Since Mr. *Brown* has represented his Au-
 thor as an enemy to natural as well as re-
 vealed religion: I beg leave to give one quo-
 tation more from Vol. 3. p. 224, 5. " Since
 " man is so constituted by means of his ra-
 " tional part as to be conscious of his rela-
 " tion to the Universal System and Princi-
 " ple of order and intelligence; he is not
 " only by nature sociable within the limits
 " of his own species: but in a yet more ge-
 " neros and extensive manner. He is not
 " only born to virtue, friendship, honesty
 " and faith, but to religion, piety, adora-
 " tion, and a generous surrender of his
 " mind to whatever happens from that Su-
 " pream Cause or Order of things, which
 " he acknowledges intirely just and per-
 " fect.

" These (continues his Lordship, still
 " speak-

* See Dr. *Middleton's* Free Inquiry; where this sen-
 timent of his Lordship is well supported by that Ingenious
 Writer.

“ speaking of himself) are our Author’s
 “ formal and grave sentiments : which, if
 “ they were not truly his, and sincerely
 “ espoused by him, as the real result of
 “ his best judgment and understanding, he
 “ would be guilty of a more than common
 “ degree of imposture. For according to
 “ his own rule, an affected gravity, and
 “ feigned seriousness, carried on through
 “ any subject in such a manner, as to leave
 “ no insight into the fiction or intended
 “ raillery, is in truth no raillery or wit
 “ at all : but a gross, immoral, and illiberal
 “ way of abuse, foreign to the character
 “ of a good writer, a gentleman, or man
 “ of worth.” ——— This admirable pas-
 sage of the noble Author strongly expresseth
 an utter abhorrence of the broken hints,
 the ambiguous expressions, the sly insinua-
 tions, dark innuendos and ludicro-serious,
 with which *Mr. Brown* has dared charge
 his Lordship : who thereby gives his in-
 telligent reader a bold challenge to find
 any such instances of unfairness in his wri-
 tings. And whether he has made good
 his Charge, we now proceed to examine.

SECT. II. He here represents his Author
 as denying a state of future punishment ;
 and in confirmation of this charge, quotes
 E a pas-

a passage in *Misc.* 3. ch. 2. In which are several instructive and moving pieces of moral painting. I could wish his Lordship's imaginary characters in state had been only imaginary, when they were drawn, and without original in real life. Having pathetically shewn, how common it is for men to sin against their professed and real principles, or judgment of their minds, through a wrong and vicious Taste and corrupt dispositions of the heart: * he observes that in such instances even conscience, or the religious argument of a future punishment, is likely to have but little influence. For, disdaining to be thought like their credulous inferiors, such persons are apt to shew, that they look upon the pious narrations no better than children's tales, or the amusement of the mere vulgar. This Mr. *Brown* interprets, as if his Lordship, while he is only describing others, meant to deliver his own sentiments. As well may he say, that when he describes certain Suitors to power and Traffickers of in-

* This Mr. *Brown* has quoted in his 223 p. immediately after censuring his Lordship for maintaining the All-sufficiency of the moral Taste.

inward worth and liberty, he means to describe himself.

Mr. *Brown* supposes, that it is with a design to disprove a future punishment ; when his Lordship observes, It is malice only and not goodness, that makes us afraid. But he is not then speaking of the particular case of sinners, but of religious men in general ; who will find great satisfaction in the principles of true and genuine piety : and while they have right apprehensions of God, believing him to be so good as to exceed the very best of us in goodness, can have no dread or suspicion, (such as the superstitious naturally have) to render them uneasy : for it is malice only and not goodness, that can make us afraid. And thus to recommend a truly orthodox faith and sound religion, Mr. *Brown* ! is it not really becoming the philosopher and patriot, the lover of his country and mankind ?

Neither can his Lordship be justly supposed to intend any objection against the doctrine of future punishment ; when he observes, that provocation and offence, anger and revenge are necessarily excluded in a Being, which is perfect and universal.

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Since

Since perfect goodness, with which those human weaknesses are incompatible, will itself dispose the Deity to punish vice. This observation indeed his Lordship does not make in this letter; because he is writing upon another subject: but it is agreeable to what he has advanced elsewhere. For in his Inquiry he observes, which our Critic has quoted, that a man may punish without anger; and that vice begets a consciousness of ill desert, both with respect to God and man. And again, he says, "The principle of *fear of future punishment and hope of future reward* is a great advantage, security, and support to virtue." Let the reader compare this last observation with the 250 and 252 p. of our Critic, where he says, that according to Lord *Shaftsbury's* Scheme, religious fear is supernumerary and useless, irrational and groundless. Once more; in one of his letters to a young Man at the University, his Lordship has these words; — " 'Tis there alone, that we have need of recourse to Fire and Brimstone, and what other punishments the Divine Goodness (for our good) has condescended to threaten us with; where the force of those arguments, drawn from the reasons and

" ex-

“ excellence of God’s laws, cannot prevail.”

So that the observation, *It is malice only, and not goodness, which can make us afraid*, is plainly just, as it is applied by his Lordship to religion in general; although like all other general observations, it admits of an exception, and may not hold true, when applied to a particular case which his Lordship is not considering. It is surprizing therefore that it has been censured by that able philosopher and divine Dr. *Butler*, under whose authority Mr. *Brown* (for he seldom sees but with the eyes of Others) is glad to shelter himself. The Doctor might have observed, that his own sentiment concerning the certainty and reason of divine punishment, is clearly and fully expressed in the passages I have just quoted, and many others. And I am the more surprized at his mistaken and unfair censure on account of the good acquaintance with the noble Author, as well as the judgment, sagacity and candour, which He elsewhere discovers in all his excellent writings.

SECT. III. To shew that his Lordship means to invalidate the credibility of Gospel
Hi-

History, he in this section produceth a quotation from *Misc.* 2. Ch. 2; where he says, that the best Christian now in the world is but a sceptic christian. It is remarkable, that Mr. *Brown*, like an honest critic, has cleared this assertion of all difficulty by observing, that by scepticism his Author means any evidence, which comes short of demonstration. And it is in this sense alone, that his Lordship calls those Christians, who being destitute of the means of certainty, depend on history and tradition for their belief, sceptic Christians. Methinks however, that he shews more than sufficient resentment for his Lordship's use of this epithet: which, if custom so pleased, might well express the rational foundation of a christian's faith, *viz.* examination, judgment and conviction.

In his 260 p. Our Critic speaks, as if his Lordship maintain'd, ' That human testimony is insufficient to support the credibility of the scripture history.' Whereas there is no such assertion in all the Characteristicks, but frequent assertions there are of the contrary. Thus when he is recommending the use of criticism and free examination in religious subjects: His Lordship says, " It is to this Art we owe the
" re-

“ recovery of letters in these latter ages.—
 “ It is to this Art, that even the sacred
 “ Writers themselves owe their highest
 “ purity and correctness. So sacred ought
 “ the art itself to be esteemed, when from
 “ its support alone is formed that judicious
 “ and learned strength, by which the De-
 “ fenders of our holy religion are able so
 “ successfully to refute the Heathens, Jews,
 “ Sectarians, Heretics, and other enemies
 “ or opposers of our primitive and antient
 “ faith.” Please to observe his Lordship’s
 expression, *primitive and antient faith*: it
 is not the holy mysteries of our religion.
 A distinction this, which is absolutely ne-
 cessary to a right understanding of the Cha-
 racteristicks.

Our Critic censures his Author’s Dia-
 logue in *Misc.* 5. C. 3. and objects ‘ that
 ‘ while he pretends only to prove, that
 ‘ the scripture cannot be a foundation for
 ‘ uniformity of opinion in all things; he
 ‘ hath thrown out such insinuations as evi-
 ‘ dently imply that there can be no foun-
 ‘ dation for believing any thing in the Gos-
 ‘ pel-History.’ Where do such insinuations
 lie? When the Sceptic or polite Scholar
 is objecting against the wild project of re-
 conciling differences in opinion: he urges
 the

the difficulty of finding a sufficient rule, that shall have but one interpretation; and that the rule of Scripture itself must be insufficient to this purpose, 'till the whole christian World are united in their sentiments concerning the question, What writings ought to be received as scriptural? And is this reasoning, *Mr. Brown!* unworthy of a Christian? Has any man or body of men a right to determine that question for others, so as to oblige them to give their assent and consent to his or their determination? Ought not every man on the contrary to use his own judgment? — But the sceptical Gentleman is so far from insinuating the incredibility of any thing in the Gospel-History; that he advances not one sentiment, which is not supported with the Authority of two Great Divines of our Church: — nay, he expressly says, “The
 “ first holy Messengers, brought with them
 “ their proper testimonials in their lives,
 “ their manners and behaviour, as well as
 “ in powerful works, miracles, and signs
 “ from above.” Is this, *Mr. Brown!* the language of an unbeliever?

I should be surprized at *Mr. Brown's* wide interpretation of the passage quoted in his 270 p. but that it was necessary in
 or-

order to give him an opportunity of arraigning his Author's sagacity and good sense. The passage itself is a plain declaration in favour of revelation, asserting " The collateral testimony of other antient records " to be one good argument or plea against " that natural suspicion of vulgar sceptics, " that the holy records themselves were " no other, than the pure invention of an " interested party in behalf of their own " rich corporation."

SECT. IV. Our Critic here charges his Author with a contempt of miracles in general; which, he says, his Lordship derides in the expression, *The mockery of miracles*. But this expression cannot be found in all the Characteristicks. In the *Misc.* Mr. Brown refers to, his Lordship speaks of the mockery of modern miracles, and of other pretences to miracles and inspiration in former ages: and this he does in a plain and express contradistinction to those signs, prodigies, or miracles, which in the sentence immediately preceding he acknowledges, and mentions as recorded in Holy Writ.—Error should be exposed with calmness, but this palpable instance of dishonesty and slander, Mr. Brown! well merits our abhorrence.

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The great principle of the enemies of christianity, which our Critic has given us in his 272 p. and affirms to be the foundation, which the noble Writer builds upon, is neither in stile nor sentiment agreeable to his Lordship's elegant manner. Neither does He any where maintain, that miracles are not any proof of a revelation, as he affirms: but expressly asserts the contrary, in the passage Mr. *Brown* refers to; the substance of which is this: " He that is not
 " induced to believe in God by the con-
 " templation of the Universe, its laws and
 " government; will not be convinced by
 " any miracles: which cannot in themselves
 " ascertain the moral character of the pow-
 " ers, by which they are effected; nor of
 " course the true intention, the infallibility
 " and certainty of whatever such powers
 " assert. But to whom the laws of this
 " universe and its government appear just:
 " to him they speak the government of one
 " Just-One; to him they reveal and wit-
 " ness a God, and laying in him the foun-
 " dation of this first faith, they fit him
 " for a subsequent one. * He can then
 " hearken

* St. *John*, C. 14. v. 1. *Ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

“ hearken to historical revelation ; and is
 “ then fitted, and not till then, for the re-
 “ ception of any message or miraculous
 “ notice from above.” Is this, Mr. *Brown*!
 affirming, that miracles are no proof of a
 revelation? But that in this passage we have
 the real sentiment of his Lordship, is ma-
 nifest, because it is delivered by one of the
 personages, who sustain the sceptical or ob-
 jecting part, and are allowed by his Lord-
 ship not to be over-tame and tractable in
 their disposition. See Vol. 3. p. 293. —

’Tis somewhat pleasant to observe of Mr. *Brown*, immediately after having indulged himself in a fit of virulence against his Author, how easily he falls into an humble imitation of him, as far as his understanding and genius will permit. Thus after having inveighed against Him, *as striking at the very basis of all revealed religion*, partly to vent his spleen, and partly perhaps to hide the pious fraud; he adopts his Lordship’s fundamental principle and reasoning concerning miracles: “ which if they be signs
 “ only of power and not of goodness, will
 “ not, his Lordship says, procure trust or
 “ credit for the powers by which they
 “ are effected.” This reflection, Mr. *Brown* even while he would dissemble, betrays his

approbation of, by pursuing it at large ; and
 shewing, ' that miraculous or supernatural
 ' effects are no otherwise a display, proof,
 ' or revelation, of the Divinity, than as
 ' they are evidently subservient to the ends
 ' of wisdom and goodness.' Again, his
 Lordship says, " The Contemplation of the
 " Universe, its laws and government, is
 " the only means, which can establish the
 " sound belief of a Deity." Mr. *Brown*
 echoes in these words : ' Mankind are con-
 ' vinced of the Being of a God, by a union
 ' of power, wisdom, and goodness, dis-
 ' played in the visible creation.' His Lord-
 ' ship says, " He that is well-grounded in
 " the first faith, (namely the principles of
 " natural religion,) is fitted for the reception
 " of any message or miraculous notice from
 " above ;" is ready to receive any message,
 that is confirmed by miracles. This in-
 deed is a step further, than our Critic ex-
 pressly goes ; who seems to pay no other
 regard to miracles, than to common and
 natural effects ; and will needs see the
 actual subserviency of the miraculous or su-
 pernatural effect to the ends of wisdom and
 goodness, ere he will accept the message :
 whereas his Lordship being convinced of
 a Deity, is willing to receive the message
 barely upon the Testimony of the con-
 comitant

mitant miracle; and does not suspend his assent, till he has discovered the ends and uses of the miracle, but is content with this simple one, *viz.* that it is wrought in confirmation of the message. So that, I fear, upon examination Mr. *Brown* himself will prove the greater sceptic of the Two.

His Misrepresentations crowded so thick upon me in his 272 p. that I had like to have passed over his aspersions, That his Lordship derides our Saviour's miracles in particular, as if they were mock-miracles. When his Lordship observes, that our Saviour's miracles carry with them a certain festivity, alacrity, and good-humour, so remarkable, that he looks upon it as impossible not to be moved in a pleasant manner at their recital: is this denying the reality of his miracles? Is a history the less credible for having some humorous and facetious passages. See *John*, ch. 2. v. 10. Does this jocular saying of the Governour invalidate the Evangelist's history? Or must every one, who thinks it a pleasant saying, be therefore an unbeliever? Must a Christian read without taste, or renounce his profession? Would you then, Mr. *Brown*! improve upon the Methodist's principle, and say, it is a sin to smile?

SECT.

SECT. V. Our Critic's charge against his Author, as asserting, that the founders of christianity were enthusiasts in the vulgar sense of that word, is not supported by any express quotation : which his candid reader must excuse ; for indeed there is no such assertion in all his Author's writings. On the contrary, his Lordship condemns the objection, brought by the malicious opposers of early christianity, who attributed the Apostles Gift of Tongues to the power of new wine ; I say he condemns this objection by calling it a sophistical one, which word in his Lordship's style always conveys a mean and contemptuous idea.

Mr. *Brown* conjectures, that his Author designs to destroy the credit of scripture-prophecy in his letter on Enthusiasm ; and that He believes, or affects to believe, the story of a man's speaking *Latin* by the sole force of imagination and enthusiasm. Surely never did an inverting glass so directly misrepresent objects, as our Critic's brains do his Author's meaning : which is solely to expose the prevailing superstition and enthusiasm of his time.

SECT. VI. Our Critic seems entirely to misunderstand his Author's notion of a religious

gious Establishment, which is plainly this : That to the end of maintaining a public Form of Religion, it is sufficient that the Civil Magistrate prescribe and countenance one, encourage it by his own example, and invite those who may assist in it with moderate offers : without injoining a conformity to it under severe penalties, or any way violating the rights of private judgment. And this sentiment was very proper to pacify those warm and jealous friends of the Constitution as they pretended : who moved for violent measures against Dissenters ; and with the firebrand of that fashionable Cry, The Church is in danger ! would have set the nation in flames. And his Lordship's opinion is verified in the experience of these happy times : as will appear to any one, who compares the State of the dissenting interest in former times of persecution, with the State of it under the present mild and tolerating Government. We have found that the moderation and voluntary indulgence of the executive Powers has heightened that sociable and complying spirit, which his Lordship represents, by the story of his travelling Friends, to be naturally prevailing as well in religious as in other matters : and that it has been very assisting to many sensible Men, in their endeavours to reconcile them-

themselves to several untoward conditions of their admittance into the established Church : such Men, I am speaking of, as from a certain easiness of temper are won by a gentle invitation ; but being sincerely in the interest of Liberty, would nevertheless in all probability have shewn a different spirit, had they been compelled with an air of severity and force.

Mr. *Brown's* next charge against his Author, is, That he represents Christianity as of an unfociable temper. But when his Lordship in his Letter on Enthusiasm condemns " that new sort of policy, which
 " out of a supernatural charity has taught
 " us the way of plaguing one another most
 " devoutly ; and the project of uniformity
 " of opinion, which is become the chief
 " care of the magistrate : " What a stupid or perverse Reader must that be, who either ignorantly or knowingly calls this an intended aspersion upon Christianity ; which, his Lordship expressly says, obliges us to shew benevolence and charity towards all men, and in particular towards our fellow-christians, our neighbours and kindred of whatever degree.

In his 321 page our Critic charges his Author

thor with a contradiction within the compass of ten lines : let him read the passage again, and he will find the mistake to be his own.

As to that passage in the Soliloquy, quoted in Mr. *Brown's* 323 pag. there is no necessity for supposing that his Lordship intended to throw any suspicion upon our holy religion, as it is in the Gospel. I am persuaded, he meant to expose the prevailing inaccuracy and negligence of those in his time ; whose duty it was to correct and purify the notions of mankind, concerning their best self-interest, and the happiness of heaven. There is indeed a propriety and address in representing heaven by common and sensible allusions. For what so likely to gain the attention of the miser, as the sound of riches ? What so likely to enflame the heart of the ambitious, as a crown and kingdom ; or that of the epicure, as exquisite and over-flowing pleasures ? But when by this honest art of condescension, they have once gained the ear of such persons, they ought gradually to undeceive them, and rectify their notions and desires of happiness, in imitation of the holy and inspired Preachers : who, on purpose, to prevent our misconstruction, have interwoven such circumstances

stances with their allusions, as plainly distinguish heavenly enjoyments from gross and meaner things, and specify their spiritual nature. Thus the treasures in-heaven are such as moth and rust doth not corrupt, and thieves cannot break through and steal, The prize, we are encouraged to strive for, is sure to all and incorruptible. And the pleasures of heaven are eternal, and spiritually discerned; discerned by those only, who are spiritually inclined, and are possessed of good and virtuous dispositions.— That these are the Sentiments of his Lordship, is evident from many passages, I have had occasion already to quote from his Characteristicks; and will be more so to any one, who reads his preface to Dr. *Whitchcot's* Sermons. For his Lordship there recommends it to the public instructors of mankind, to convince them of an happiness in virtue, and of the purity of the reward in heaven, which is not different in sort or kind, but chiefly in degree, from that immediate happiness. Speaking of christianity, his Lordship says, It is a religion, where love is chiefly enjoined; where the heart is expressly called for; and the outward action without that is disregarded; where charity or kindness is made all in all. Then He censures those, who so explain the
future

future reward as to degrade the principle of good nature, and hereby exclude all worthy and generous dispositions, all that love and charity and affection, which the scripture enjoins; and without which no action is lovely in the sight of God or man, or in itself deserving of notice or kind reward.

Our Critic censures his Author's Observation in Vol. I. p. 99 and 100, *viz.* That the virtues of private friendship and love of our country, are not particularly enjoined in the Gospel, nor expressly enforced by any positive rewards. But this observation is not expressly delivered for an objection against Christianity: and ought not to be understood as one, nor as any insinuation against it, any more in Lord *Shaftsbury*, than in our Learned Bishop *Taylor*, or any other of our Christian Divines, who have made the same observation: Especially since his Lordship observes further by way of apology for christianity, that whatever rewards are reserved for those virtues are *happily concealed at present*. And in what follows, his Lordship seems, not to deride the Gospel, but to rally those mistaken and narrow Christians of his time, who by a misapplication of scripture thought to disengage themselves

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from

from the obligation of friendship and public spiritedness. See our 48 page at the bottom.

SECT. VII. As to the retreat of the *Israelites* from *Egypt*, his Lordship observes, That it can scarce be said in reality, from what appears in holy writ, that it was voluntary; and that the historians of other nations have presum'd to assert, that they were expelled on account of their leprosy. With what reason can it be said, that his Lordship here prefers the history of *Tacitus* and *Justin* to that of *Moses*; when he only mentions their account in a point, which his Lordship thought that *Moses* had not clearly determin'd.

In his 350 page, Mr. *Brown* seems not to understand his Author's meaning, in his reference to St. *Luke's* Preface, which I apprehended to be, that his Words, (εδοξε καμοι παρηκολαθηκασι ανωθεν πασιν ακριβως) intimate, that it was wholly of his own motion, and not by any supernatural impulse, when he undertook to write his history: and that he wrote according to his own natural judgment.

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In his 351 Page, Mr. *Brown* intimates, that his Author denies the inspiration of *Joseph*, and the divine authority of the Mosaic Dispensation. But the censure is without foundation: For his Lordship only observes, that *Joseph* gain'd *Pharaoh's* favour by out-doing the *Egyptians* in the interpretation of dreams. But as to the power, by which he did so, whether it was natural or supernatural, he is intirely silent.

And in the observations, which he makes at the conclusion of his Advice to an Author, concerning the conduct of the *Jewish* Leaders and People towards the *Canaanites*; his Lordship does not call in question God's authority, who undoubtedly has a right to commission, whom he pleases, to execute his judgments: And He is only considering, what worth and merit the *Jews* therein discover'd; which, He observes, was not such as naturally excites our esteem and admiration. And it must be owned, that the merit of a legal executioner is not used to be highly rated.

In the 3d Chapter of his Lordship's 2d miscellany is illustrated this proposition; that moderation or an indulgence given to the wit
and

and humour of men by allowing them a free inquiry into things, is corroborative of religion, and promotive of true Faith; such as the magistrate espouses or countenances; and that if any thing be more availing to this purpose than a perfect moderation, it must be a thorough Persecution; which contrary methods are incompatible, and if blended together, would mutually defeat each other's intentions.—And His must be a random head indeed, who cannot see this to be the design and meaning of his Lordship, in the first part of the Chapter, and particularly in the Story of the travelling Friends; which, since Mr. *Brown* judiciously calls a Farce, if it be not too much trouble, let himself explain, who are the *Dramatis Personæ*.

The noble Author has observed, “ That
 “ affection and love, which procures a true
 “ adherence to a new religious foundation,
 “ must depend either upon a real or counterfeited goodness in the religious Founder.
 “ Whatever ambitious spirit may inspire
 “ him; whatever savage zeal, or persecuting
 “ principle may lie in reserve, ready to disclose itself, when authority and power is
 “ once obtained, &c.” This our Critic’s sagacity suspects to be an insinuated charge against our Saviour. But his Lordship is
 there

there expressly speaking of the common practice and artifice of many sects : Out of whose charity and brotherly love come steel, fire, gibbets, rods, &c. This arbitrary and forced misapplication of yours, Mr. *Brown* ! is one instance among many others, already exposed, of flagrant calumny and injustice, which nothing can excuse.

As to *David's* dancing before the ark, the noble Author, before he mentions it, observes ; “ That if the *Jewish* Princes acted
 “ in reality according to the institutions of
 “ their great Founder ; not only musick,
 “ but even play and dance were of holy appointment and divine right.” I wonder that Dr. *Leland*, in his quotation of this passage, should omit the conditional part of it ; and thereby give it a quite different turn. Take the passage, as it lies ; and his Lordship seems to intimate his opinion, that they did not therein act according to the institutions of their great Founder : And this is sufficient to clear him from the imputation of despising the Dispensation itself of *Moses*. If his Lordship has made a mistake in his representation of *David's* dancing ; it is certainly such a one as a writer might fall into, without any great prejudice. And it is well, that the
 learned

learned Doctor has set the affair in such a religious light.

Neither ought the noble Author to be charged with designing to expose the spirit of prophecy in general; when he intimates his suspicion, that the prophesying spirit, he there mentions, had nothing of a supernatural influence: Since the Doctor himself explains it in the sense only of praise and thankfulness.

As to his Lordship's representation of the story of the Prophet *Jonah*: I do not find that his expressions, low as they may seem, are at all beneath the ideas that *Jonah* appears to have had of God: And if he meant to intimate, that some passages in his history, and several other parts of scripture, are to be parabolically understood; He has the concurrence of Mr. *Brown's* own Opinion.

Since our Critic censures his Author's sentiments concerning certain mysteries of religion: he ought to have been more definitive and intelligible upon this subject. He ought to have inquired, what his Lordship calls mysteries: by which he does not mean those ways of providence, the reason and ultimate design of which are indeed mysterious and hidden

hidden from us ; but such abstruse doctrines, as are specified in Vol. II. pag. 359. One might have expected Mr. *Brown* to explain these doctrines, so far at least as to shew that they are not contrary to reason. But it seems he prudently chose to decline the arduous task : He chose rather to flourish and brandish in the air, than enter into close fight with reason and common sense. Perhaps he was jealous, as indeed he had cause to be jealous, of a certain inconsistency in those wonderfully sublime and inexplicable mysteries with the pure simplicity ; which he afterwards justly celebrates as a great excellence in the sacred Writings.

SECT. VIII. As to this section, I have prevented myself, and obviated Mr. *Brown's* charge against his Lordship, as condemning and discarding the composition and simple stile and manner of the holy Scriptures : and shall only observe, that he speaks with respect of those “ short and summary precepts and
 “ divine laws, delivered to us in positive
 “ commands from our Sacred Legislator.
 “ 'Tis our business, (continues his Lordship
 “ in one of his Letters to a Young Man),
 “ and of all, as many as are raised in know-
 “ ledge above the poor illiterate and laborious
 “ vulgar, to explain as far as possible, the
 H “ reasons

“ reasons of those laws ; their consent with
 “ the law of nature, their suitability to So-
 “ ciety, and to the peace, happiness and en-
 “ joyment of ourselves.” *

SECT. IX. I shall only add upon this last Section of Mr. *Brown*, that his charge against his Author, as speaking contemptuously and bitterly against the ministers of the Gospel, and particularly the *English* Clergy, is *unfair and groundless*. *’Tis true indeed that he complains of the* “ far greater part and numbers
 “ of that Body of Clergy called the Church
 “ of *England*, who no more esteem them-
 “ selves a Protestant Church, or in union
 “ with those of Protestant Communion ; tho’
 “ they pretend to the name of Christian, and
 “ would have us judge of the spirit of Chri-
 “ stianity from theirs : which God prevent !
 “ lest good men should in time forsake Chri-
 “ stianity through their means.” And was there not in his Lordship’s time occasion for this complaint ? Could He speak too meanly of those, who being employed by the Public to officiate in holy things, were given up to voluptuousness and indolence, who de-
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* Does his Lordship appear Mr. *Brown* ! to have an extreme contempt of the Vulgar, or be unconcern’d for their welfare ?

graded learning, discouraged all rational inquiry and freedom of thought, and zealously preached up the treasonable doctrine of passive-obedience and non-resistance; who affected an independency upon the State, and sought to awe, enslave and prey upon mankind by their daring and presumptuous pretensions to a dread authority over some, by flattering others with unwarranted assurances of grace and favour from above, and all the arts, that are proper to win or force the superstitious, into an implicit and intire submission to priestly power? But in condemning these men, did his Lordship reflect upon the whole Body of the Clergy? No, Mr. *Brown*! be not so false to your fraternity, as to assert it. His Lordship frequently speaks well of your Order, and the institution of preaching: and in very emphatical terms in his Preface to Dr. *Whitchcot's* Sermons. And in all his Writings makes honourable and respectful mention of our *Tillotsons*, our *Barrows*, our *Chillingworths*, our *Hammonds*.

To conclude, we see from Mr. *Brown's* continually false quotations, misconstructions, and pretended insinuations of the noble Author, that in his great piety, he has not scrupled to employ false witnesses, racks and tortures, and all the other arts of an holy inquisitor

sitor against a criminal, whom he is determined to pronounce guilty. And we see also, that the writings of Lord *Shaftsbury*, which, if this inquisitor-advocate for religion had power equal to his zeal and ignorance, might probably be burnt by the hands of the common hangman; (for what less could be expected from his flaming persecution? which, without the least regard to decency or justice, breathes such senseless fury against the shade and immortally glorious memory of the noble Author:) I say, these inimitable writings, upon a just and accurate examination, appear elegantly to illustrate, and establish upon the best foundations, the great principles of Truth and Freedom, Virtue and Religion both Natural and Revealed, as well as to give the judicious reader an universal Taste for what is truly excellent in all the ingenious Arts and Sciences.

F I N I S.

